



## Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign

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### Factsheet: How Israeli arms companies benefit from EU science funds

*Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009*

- Israel is the main foreign partner for the EU's "framework programme" for scientific research, which has been allocated €53 billion between 2007 and 2013. The EU is the second only to the Israel Science Foundation in Jerusalem as a source of research funding for Israel.
- Israel expects that its investment in the EU's current research programme will be worth at least €500 million by the time it has concluded in 2013.
- Using the pretext of fighting terrorism, the EU has decided in recent years that arms companies are eligible to receive funding for "security research". Ten of the 45 initial projects described by the EU as "security research" have involved Israeli companies, academic or state institutions.
- Motorola Israel, for example, is taking part in iDetect 4All, an EU-funded surveillance project designed to provide alerts of suspicious activities near buildings or resources of economic value. Motorola is the top maker of fuses for aircraft bombs used by the Israeli air force. Weapons components bearing a Motorola label have been found by investigators from Human Rights Watch who searched the sites bombed by Israel in Gaza in late 2008 and the beginning of 2009. Motorola-made fuses were also a central part of the bomb with which Israel killed at least 28 civilians, most of them children, living in an apartment block in Qana, Lebanon, in 2006.
- The iDetect 4All project is likely to draw on experience gained from the use of surveillance technology in the occupied West Bank. Over the past five years, a Motorola radar system worth \$158 million has been installed in 47 Israeli settlements there. *The Jerusalem Post* has described the system as a "virtual fence" that uses thermal cameras to pinpoint "intruders".
- Not all of the EU-financed projects involving Israel fall under the security research category. Israel is participating, too, in road safety and environmental research. It is instructive, however, that Israeli arms companies are active in apparently civilian projects, suggesting that the technology being developed by them can have military applications.
- Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), the manufacturer of warplanes used by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories, is also benefiting from several EU-financed projects. These include the "Clean Sky" project, aimed at developing more environmentally-friendly aircraft engines. The European Commission has confirmed that IAI will be able to apply for patents on innovations realised as part of this project, allowing it to use the fruits of research financed by the European taxpayer for military purposes.
- Elbit, the largest private arms company in Israel, is taking part in a project called CAPECON (Civil Applications and Economical Effectivity of Potential UAV Configurations). Its objective is to deliver a blueprint for flying unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in civilian airspace by 2015. More commonly known as drones, Elbit's UAVs have been used frequently in attacks on Palestinian civilians, as well as in Afghanistan and Iraq. Thomas Bingham, a British law lord, has compared these weapons to landmines and cluster bombs and suggested they are so cruel "as to be beyond the pale of human tolerance".

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- Israel is intimately involved in the EU's research activities on nanotechnology. Following Israel's war against Lebanon in 2006, Shimon Peres (now Israel's president) expressed a desire to see nanotechnology yielding the weapons of the future. Although Israel has more recently conveyed the impression that most of its nanotechnology activities are medical in nature, Israel's interest in this area of science cannot be separated from the occupation of Palestine. Israel's national strategy on nanotechnology is being implemented with advice from representatives of the Israeli ministry of defence and a former president of Rafael, the Israeli weapons development authority.
- In a 2004 report, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network documented how firms in Israeli settlements in the Golan Heights and Jordan Valley were benefitting from EU research grants. The firms' participation in EU activities contradicted statements that only bodies within Israel's internationally recognised borders were entitled to cooperate with the Union.

*This factsheet was written by David Cronin, an Irish journalist living in Brussels. His book Europe's Unholy Alliance with Israel will be published by Pluto Press during 2010.*

## **Supplementary – Questions for Maire Geoghegan-Quinn Incoming EU Commissioner for Research and Innovation**

1. Will you review the participation of Israel in the EU's framework programme for research so that European taxpayers money is not given to arms companies that profit from the occupation of Palestine?
2. Will you commit yourself to revising the "security research" projects authorised by your predecessor Janez Potocnik so that firms which facilitate the abuse of human rights will not be eligible for funding?
3. Will you introduce new rules so that Israeli arms companies will not be able to participate in environmental research programmes?
4. Until now the European Commission has only given what human rights campaigners consider to be weak – and mainly verbal - assurances that firms based in Israeli settlements in the occupied territories will not be able to obtain EU research grants. Will you give more robust assurances in writing? And what steps will you take to ensure that firms based in settlements will not be able to circumvent any rules you introduce to prevent them having access to EU funds by, for example, claiming that they are actually based in Tel Aviv?
5. Will you halt the allocation of EU funds to the development of weapons such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which have been used to kill innocent civilians in Palestine and Afghanistan?
6. Will you introduce new guidelines concerning Israel's participation in EU-funded nanotechnology projects to ensure that these projects do not facilitate the development of new weapons?